

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
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S E C R E T STATE 172809

EXDIS

E.O. 11652:

TAGS:

SUBJECT: CONSULTATIONS WITH ISRAELIS ON LEBANON

REF: TEL AVIV 8595

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1. WE ARE ENCOURAGED BY WEIZMAN'S COMMENTS TO DCM AND HIS EVIDENTLY KEEN AWARENESS OF DANGER OF PROVOCATION BY CHRISTIAN EXTREMISTS. BELIEVE IDEA OF ISRAELIS HAVING REPRESENTATIVES OF CHRISTIANS TO A MEETING OUTSIDE LEBANON TO ASSURE UNDERSTANDING OF NEED FOR UTMOST RESTRAINT IS A GOOD ONE. YOU SHOULD URGE WEIZMAN TO PURSUE IT AND TO TAKE ANY OTHER POSSIBLE STEPS TO PREVENT PROVOCATION BY CHRISTIANS.

2. AS YOU WELL UNDERSTAND, WE WANT TO KEEP IN CLOSEST POSSIBLE TOUCH WITH THE ISRAELIS IN THE DELICATE PERIOD AHEAD WHEN WE WILL BE ATTEMPTING TO SECURE THE CEASE-FIRE, KEEP SARKIS IN THE PRESIDENCY AND STRENGTHEN LEBANESE GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS, AND PUSH FOR MORE WORKABLE SECURITY ARRANGMENTS IN BEIRUT. FACT THAT CEASE-FIRE IS HOLDING AND THAT SYRIANS AND ISRAELIS ARE SHOWING RESTRAINT IS ENCOURAGING, BUT WE ARE KEENLY AWARE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUD-DEN TURN-AROUNDS IN SITUATION AS VOLATILE AS THE ONE WE NOW FACE IN LEBANON. YOU SHOULD STRESS TO WEIZMAN AND TO OTHER SENIOR ISRAELIS THAT WE WANT TO STAY IN CONTINUOUS TOUCH WITH THEM ON LEBANON. IF THERE IS ANY SIGN OF CHANGE

FOR THE WORSE IN THE SITUATION WE WANT TO CONSULT WITH THEM BEFORE ACTION IS TAKEN.

3. IN STATE 171120 YOU HAVE STANDING AUTHORIZATION TO WEIGH IN WITH ISRAELIS AT ANY TIME YOU THINK THEY MIGHT BE CONSIDERING ACTIONS WHICH COULD COMPLICATE LEBANESE SITUATION. YOUR INSTRUCTIONS IN THIS REGARD ARE REAFFIRMED HEREWITH.

4. IF YOU HAVE NOT ALREADY DONE SO, YOU MIGHT ALSO MAKE FOLLOWING POINTS:

--AS REGARDS LEBANON, WE AND THE ISRAELIS SHARE MANY COMMON
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VIEWS AND CONCERNS. WE BOTH WANT THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY TO HAVE A SENSE OF SECURITY. WE WOULD BE AS CONCERNED AS THE ISRAELIS IF THERE WERE TO OCCUR A MAJOR CHANGE IN THE STRATEGIC BALANCE IN LEBANON WHICH WOULD HAVE BROAD REGIONAL IMPLICATIONS.

--YOU MAY TELL WEIZMAN, IN REGARD TO THE WARNING THAT HE ASKED THAT WE PASS TO THE SARG (TEL AVIV 8465) THAT WHILE WE HAVE NOT USED HIS EXACT WORDS WE HAVE MADE CLEAR TO THE SYRIANS THE ISRAELI CONCERNS BOTH THROUGH OUR EMBASSY IN DAMASCUS AND THROUGH SYRIAN AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON, AND THE SYRIANS UNDERSTOOD. WE DID THIS IMMEDIATELY SUBSEQUENT TO ISRAEL'S OVERFLIGHTS OF BEIRUT AND GOI STATEMENTS ON LEBANON. SYRIANS CAN BE IN NO DOUBT ABOUT SERIOUSNESS WITH WHICH ISRAEL VIEWS THE SITUATION.

--WE WOULD LIKE AN EARLY OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS IN DEPTH WHAT WE BOTH WOULD LIKE TO SEE EMERGE IN LEBANON OVER THE LONG RUN AND HOW WE CAN WORK TOGETHER TO BRING IT ABOUT.

5. WE WILL BE SENDING YOU BY SEPTTEL REPORT WE HAVE FROM WELL INFORMED LEBANESE SOURCE REGARDING POSSIBLE UPCOMING MOVES BY CHRISTIANS WHICH UNDERSCORE THE URGENCY OF ISRAEL'S MOVING TO RESTRAIN THEIR CHRISTIAN FRIENDS. VANCE

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